

REMARKS

By this amendment, claims 1 and 18 have been amended. Thus, claims 1-16 and 18-23 are now active in the application. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application are respectfully requested.

In items 1 and 2 on pages 2-6 of the Office Action, claims 1-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ohshita et al. (U.S. 4,823,740); and claims 18-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ohshita '740 in view of Vidt (U.S. 4,790,251). These rejections are clearly inapplicable to the claims as now presented, for the following reasons.

Each of the independent claims 1 and 18 has now been amended to require the fluidized-bed gasification furnace to include, among its other elements, "a fluidizing gas dispersion device for blowing a fluidizing gas into said fluidized bed portion to fluidize the fluidized medium in said fluidized bed portion." Thus, with exemplary reference to the drawing figures, each of claims 1 and 18 requires a fluidized-bed gasification furnace to include at least: a fluidized bed portion 8, a fluidizing gas dispersion device 6, a discharge port 16, a fluidized medium discharge chute 20 and a gas blow device 13 or 14 for blowing a gas into an interior of the fluidized medium discharge chute 20.

In the rejection of claims 1 and 18, the Examiner has taken the position that the claimed medium discharge chute is met by the diffuser 52 of the Ohshita et al. patent, and the claimed "gas blow device" is met by the portions 54, 55 and 56 of the diffuser 52.

However, the elements 54, 55 and 56 of Ohshita et al. are used to inject a fluidizing gas upwardly so as to produce a circulating fluidizing bed (see column 3, lines 40-48 of Ohshita et al.). Accordingly, if the Examiner takes the position that the chambers 54, 55 and 56 of Ohshita et al. constitute the claimed "gas blow device", then the Ohshita et al. patent cannot be said to also include a fluidizing gas dispersion device for blowing a fluidizing gas into the fluidizing bed portion to fluidize the fluidized medium in the fluidized bed portion, as required by each of claims 1 and 18. In other words, the Examiner cannot rely upon the same elements of Ohshita et

al. arrangement to meet both the "fluidizing gas dispersion device" limitation of each of claims 1 and 18 and the "gas blow device" limitation of each of claims 1 and 18.

It is noted further that the Ohshita et al. arrangement includes a blower 57 and a blower 60. However, the blower 57 is connected to a diffuser 52 to supply a pressurized gas to the gas chambers 54, 55 and 56 (see column 3, lines 33-39). Therefore, the blower 57 does not meet the "gas blow device" limitation of each of claims 1 and 18 wherein the gas blow device is provided for blowing a gas into an interior of the fluidized medium discharge chute. Further, the blower 60 of Ohshita et al. is connected to an auxiliary diffuser 62 to supply a pressurized gas to the auxiliary diffuser 62 so as to assure proper movement of medium within a chamber 59 (see column 5, lines 17-22). Thus, the blower 60 of Ohshita et al. also cannot be said to meet the "gas blow device" limitation of claims 1 and 18. Accordingly, for the reasons discussed above, it is believed apparent that the Ohshita et al. patent fails to disclose or suggest a fluidized-bed gasification furnace including both a fluidizing gas dispersion device as claimed in each of claims 1 and 18.

The Vidt patent was cited by the Examiner for teaching "a gas blowing device (a purge gas source 65) [that] is connected to the jacketed screw conveyor 11 ...". However, the Vidt patent clearly fails to provide any disclosure or suggestion that would have obviated the above-discussed shortcomings of the Ohshita et al. patent.

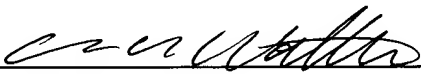
Accordingly, for the above reasons, it is submitted to be clear that claims 1 and 18 are not anticipated by the Ohshita et al. patent. It is further believed apparent that the differences discussed above are such that a person having ordinary skill in the art would clearly not have been motivated to modify the Ohshita et al. patent or to make any combination of the references of record in such a manner as to result in or otherwise render obvious the present invention of claims 1 and 18. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1 and 18, as well as the claims depending therefrom, are clearly allowable over the prior art of record.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is clearly in condition for allowance. An early notice thereof is earnestly solicited.

If, after reviewing this Amendment, the Examiner feels there are any issues remaining which must be resolved before the application can be passed to issue, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned by telephone in order to resolve such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

Norihisa MIYOSHI et al.

By: 
Charles R. Watts
Registration No. 33,142
Attorney for Applicants

CRW/asd
Washington, D.C. 20006-1021
Telephone (202) 721-8200
Facsimile (202) 721-8250
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